

Confirmation Preparation Handbook

ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH



"I have called you by name;
You are mine"

- Isaiah 43:1

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and we shall be created; and You will renew the face of the earth. O God, Who did teach the hearts of Your faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dear Confirmation Parents and Candidates,

Greetings from St. Paul Parish! I am pleased to welcome you to our confirmation preparation program. The Sacrament of Confirmation is an important part of every Catholic's spiritual development. As primary educators, parents, you are invited to continue the spiritual formation of your child in partnership with your pastor and the local parish community, to ensure that your teen receives valuable and ongoing faith formation. The preparation process for Confirmation began at home, many years ago when you presented your child to God in the sacrament of Baptism. As a parent you have fostered and directed spiritual growth by the atmosphere in your home, the example of your life, and your participation in the celebration of the sacraments. Now your young teenager is at the stage of strengthening his or her commitment to the faith through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The goal of this sacramental preparation program is to help young people be receptive and responsive to the graces and challenges of the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates will learn it is a Sacrament of Initiation that deepens their relationship with the Church. They become more aware of the presence and action of the Spirit and his gifts within them, which empower them to live as Jesus did. They will discover ways to fulfill the specific responsibilities that are theirs as Christians.

As young teens struggle to clarify their own convictions, attitudes, and values, parents are their chief models. Faith is "caught more than taught". In undertaking more seriously your role of preparing your teenager for Confirmation, consider these questions:

- Do I keep lines of communication open with my teenager?
- Do I make time for prayer, both private and communal?
- Do I actively participate in the sacramental life of the Church?
- Do I try to grow in knowledge of the faith and share it with my family?
- Do I give loving service to those inside and outside my family circle?
- Am I involved with parish activities as much as I could be?

We hope that this information about the Confirmation program will enable you to devote some time to preparing, discussing, and praying about it. Additional information will be provided throughout the preparation period. If you have any questions regarding the information here or any other aspect of the program, please contact us. We are here to assist you in any possible way.

Know that you and your child will be in the prayers of the entire parish community during this time of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I invite you to enter into this process with an open mind and a desire to know the Lord in a deeper way. If you do, I guarantee you will experience the Sacrament of Confirmation as a holy and profound sign of God's unconditional love for you. May the Lord bless you with peace as you and your family prepare for this important sacrament.

Blessings and Peace,

Marie Fleisner

Director of Religious Education

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Why is the Sacrament of Confirmation necessary in the Catholic Church?

In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are reborn into the new life in Christ by receiving sanctifying grace into our soul, which is a share in God's Divine Life. Baptism is necessary because we are born without sanctifying grace due to our being separated from God through Original Sin. As the Blessed Trinity dwells within the soul because of Baptism, the person becomes an adopted child of God and a member of the Catholic Church.

In Baptism, the Holy Spirit enriches the soul with the three Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. These virtues allow us to believe in God, to trust in His promises and to love God and our neighbor. The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit aid us in making decisions in conformity with God's will, which lead to a life of interior joy and peace. The seven Gifts are Wisdom, Fortitude, Knowledge, Fear of the Lord, Understanding, Right Counsel and Piety.

The three Theological Virtues and the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in Baptism for personal sanctification, to make us holy. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit *strengthens* the Virtues and the Gifts so that we can be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ by living our faith "out loud".

In our culture today, young people are bombarded with the lie that their value as a human being is based on how they look and the materials they possess. This contradicts the truth that our dignity comes from being a child of God, created in His image and likeness, and destined for eternal life with God in Heaven.

Furthermore, young people face a society that is indifferent to God and focuses on self. Selfishness only leads to hopelessness and despair. Why? We find meaning in life through self-giving love: giving of ourselves to God, to others in friendship and service, and possibly to a spouse in a life-long commitment of the Sacrament of Matrimony. We were created by God and for God, and our joy lies in knowing, loving and serving God and our neighbor through self-giving love.

The graces received in Confirmation allow us to grow in goodness through the moral virtues. The virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity inform, and give life to, the moral virtues of prudence (making good decisions), justice (giving to God and others what is due), fortitude (courage) and temperance (providing balance with desires). Under temperance falls chastity, the spiritual power that guards against falling into the trap of using another person, or being used, as an object for sexual pleasure. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit complete and perfect these same virtues.

As you can see, the Virtues and Gifts that are *strengthened* in Confirmation are crucial for our young people to know who they are in Christ, to protect their dignity, and to be faithful in following Him. Let us prepare well our young people to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and continue post-Confirmation to help them grow in their cooperation with the graces of the Sacrament. Confirmation is not an end or a graduation, but a deepening of what was given at Baptism. The person is being called to a greater public witness of faith in Christ: Confirmation enables the person to fulfill this call.

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the sacrament through which the Holy Spirit comes to us in a special way to join us more closely to Jesus and His Church and to seal and strengthen us as Christ's witnesses. We are accepted as fully initiated members of the Church and are expected to take up the challenge of becoming mature Disciples of Christ. We view Confirmation as a sealing of our baptism. It is an opportunity for us to say "yes" to the vows taken for us by our godparents in the sacrament of Baptism.

What does the word confirmation mean?

Confirmation means, “making strong” or “strengthening”. The work begun by our baptism is strengthened or completed by Confirmation.

What are the effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation?

- The recipient of the Sacrament of Confirmation receives the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as He was once granted to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. (Note: One receives the Holy Spirit along with the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Baptism)
- Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace
- Confirmation unites us more firmly to Jesus Christ and strengthens our bond with the Church.
- Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation roots one more deeply in participation in the life of the Trinity
- The sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit (which one receives at Baptism) are increased within the recipient
- Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation gives one special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the Faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross
- Upon reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, one is imprinted with an indelible spiritual mark (character) which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of His Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be His witness
- The Confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and officially

- Catechism of the Catholic Church #1302 - 1305

Therefore, the Holy Spirit strengthens the Theological Virtues and seven Gifts in you in the Sacrament of Confirmation to join in Christ’s mission as His true witness to spread and defend the Faith by word and deed, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

What are the special gifts of Confirmation?

Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds. Confirmation, like Baptism, **imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character** on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once.

In the Latin Church this sacrament is administered when the **age of reason** has been reached, and its celebration is ordinarily reserved to **the bishop**, thus signifying that this sacrament strengthens the ecclesial bond. A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must

- profess the faith
- be in the state of grace
- have the intention of receiving the sacrament
- and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.

The **essential rite of Confirmation** is anointing the forehead of the baptized with sacred chrism, together with the laying on of the minister's hand and the words: "*Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*" (Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.) in the Roman rite.

When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, its **connection with Baptism** is expressed, among other ways, by the renewal of baptismal promises. The celebration of Confirmation during the Eucharist helps underline the unity of the sacraments of Christian initiation.

--Catechism of the Catholic Church #1316-1321

What are the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and what is their meaning?

- **Wisdom:** enables us to see that all of life can be reduced to one simple truth: love of God and neighbor.
- **Understanding:** to see beneath the surface of a problem or an issue and to recognize what is really involved.
- **Knowledge: to get the facts straight.** To be able to recognize the difference between truth and error.
- **Courage:** Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge enable us to be convinced of what is good. **Courage** gives us the strength to be able to hold on to and defend that which is good no matter how difficult or dangerous it might be.
- **Right Judgment:** gifted by God's Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge, we will be able to figure out how best to act in a tough situation.
- **Reverence:** this gift enables us to be sensitive to the love and holiness God offers us through Jesus and the Christian community.
- **Awe in God's Presence:** this gift enables us to have a keen awareness of just how special and awesome God really is.

What if you attend a Catholic High School; do you still need to participate in the Confirmation Program?

Short answer: Yes! Why? Confirmation is a parish celebration. Sacrament programs are intended to form candidates to live life in union with Christ and the Christian community. The parish has responsibility for this formation. While the Catholic school provides excellent academic formation, the sacrament preparation program provides the opportunity for the candidate to put their faith in practice in the parish and in the wider community. Students attending Catholic schools have a unique and powerful opportunity to give witness to Christ by the way they participate in the sacrament preparation program of the parish. We invite Catholic school students to share their knowledge and gift of faith in the Confirmation program and we are very thankful for what they have to offer their peers.

What will be expected of you after you have received the Sacrament of Confirmation?

After receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, you will be expected to be a witness of Christ, to proclaim your faith, to defend it, and to spread it whenever possible.

What does it mean to be a witness to Christ?

To be a witness to Christ means to know, to love, and to worship God in the way Christ wants us to. This means that we have to:

- Know what Christ taught by studying the Scriptures.
- Obey God's Commandments and the examples of Jesus by keeping pure and free from sin.

- Worship God properly by receiving and living out the Sacraments and by participating in the Mass each Sunday and Holy Days of obligation. Confirmation helps us to take very seriously these duties of knowing, obeying, and worshipping God.

What are some of the ways you can promote the faith?

You can promote your faith by prayer, worship and deed. You can demonstrate your faith by “Living as Jesus taught us” and by receiving the Sacraments of Eucharist and Penance as often as possible. Full initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation opens up new possibilities of involvement with your faith in your parish. You are encouraged to participate in the various ministries at the parish such as being a Lector, Usher, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, helping with Faith Formation, and many other roles within your parish.

Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Involvement of the Family

“In every program of religious education and in every Catholic school, the primacy of parents as educators in the faith is to be respected and stressed. Especially at the time of preparation for the reception of a Sacrament, parents should be fully engaged in the renewal of their own understanding of that Sacrament” (*Synod V Acts* n. 146). Furthermore, active participation in the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist, regular Reconciliation, daily family prayer, and Scripture reading enable families to live the Gospel life of Jesus Christ.

Period of Preparation

Young people need an adequate time of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation for the necessary openness one needs to be receptive to the interior movements of the Holy Spirit.

“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit — His actions, His gifts and His biddings — in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community” (CCC 1309).

Therefore, the period of preparation is to be two years. “Christians have become the temple of the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit sanctifies us so that we can become saints by:

- teaching us to pray to the Father.
- prompting us to act so as to bear “the fruit of the Spirit” by charity in action.
- healing the wounds of sin and renewing us interiorly through a spiritual transformation.
- enlightening and strengthening us to live as “children of light” through “all that is good and right and true”.

Elements of Preparation

God created us to know, love and serve Him in this life in order to be united forever with Him in Heaven. We come to know the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit through the teachings of the Church and through a daily habit of prayer. We show our love for God through living the Faith and serving Him by serving our neighbor, especially those in need.

Canon Law expresses the importance of proper formation. According to Canon 885 §1, care is to be taken that the Sacrament is conferred “on subjects who properly and reasonably seek it.” Further, Canon

889, §2 states that a “person to be confirmed must have the use of reason, be suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew baptismal promises.” These canons make it clear that our young people need to be formed through a comprehensive curriculum, one that should include but not be limited to helping the student:

- Develop a more intimate union with Jesus Christ in daily prayer (CCC 1309; Synod V Acts n. 149).
- Cultivate a relationship with the Holy Spirit as well as have a more lively familiarity with His actions, His gifts and His promptings in order to be capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities.
- Be committed to living a Sacramental Life, above all by participating in Sunday Mass each week and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently.
- Comprehend how to live life in the Holy Spirit.
- Affirm Church teachings organized under the heading Theology of the Body.
- Grasp the Church’s moral teachings on bioethical issues, in particular understanding the great harm and misery caused by abortion and contraception.

Rite of Enrollment

The immediate preparation for Confirmation formally begins with the Rite of Enrollment, when the students officially and publically state their desire to enter into preparations for the Sacrament of Confirmation. At the beginning of the first Confirmation Session, each student will be given a Confirmation Commitment Form that s/he will sign. Candidates will stand and state their names and make their commitment to the requirements of Confirmation. Students will hand in the Commitment Form at the end of the ceremony when they officially become Candidates.

Preparation for Confirmation

The stage of immediate preparation for Confirmation includes the following, which the candidate is expected to perform:

1. Attend all sessions being held for Confirmation preparation.
2. Attend a **retreat**. Freshman retreat will be a ½ day retreat; Sophomore retreat is a full-day.
3. Attend weekly Mass. Sunday Mass is **not** optional for Catholics! Celebration of the Eucharist is our highest form of worship, and candidates are expected to be active participants. This is the faith they will affirm! Students will be required to sign in at the Mass they attend. [Note: if you attend Mass at another parish you must bring in a bulletin from the parish where you attended.]

Mass times: 4:30 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday

4. Participate regularly in the life of the Church not only by attending Sunday **Mass**, but also by attending Mass on Holy Days, receiving the Sacraments regularly, including Reconciliation
5. Participating in a service project. (Details will be provided.)
6. Complete and return all **forms** by the required dates.
7. Select a sponsor and complete the sponsor/candidate activities.
8. Select a saint name and write report on the saint.
9. Write a letter to the bishop describing your desire and readiness to receive the Sacrament.
10. Participate in a mandatory interview with the pastor and/or the DRE to determine spiritual readiness to receive the Sacrament (about one month before confirmation)

If there are any conflicts throughout the year with scheduling or completing any of the assigned work, the *student* is to take responsibility for calling/meeting with the DRE to make other arrangements. ***Please do not wait until the last minute!***

The Role of Parents

When you brought your child to the Church for Baptism, you accepted the sacred responsibility and privilege of "training them in the practice of the faith." (Rite of Baptism, 30). You were reminded that you are the first and best teachers of your child and you were entrusted with keeping the light of faith burning brightly in their life. Parents instruct their children, both by what they say and what they do. It is now time for that next step. Confirmation is a celebration of the ongoing power of the already present Holy Spirit in our lives, the Spirit first received in Baptism-1 Through this sacrament, the gifts of the Holy Spirit first received at Baptism are deepened and intensified.

Following are some suggestions on ways to assist your young person in their preparation:

1. Pray for and with your child(ren) every day. Make family prayer a priority.
2. Be a witness to your son/daughter in following the Commandments.
3. Be interested in what your son/daughter is learning in class. Ask questions. Attend class with him/her when you have the opportunity.
4. Initiate conversation about the Sacrament of Confirmation, share your memories of receiving the sacrament, and encourage them to share their ideas of how receiving this sacrament will change their faith life.
5. Help with the selection of a sponsor and saint's name for Confirmation.
6. Make sure all documents are completed and returned in a timely manner.

Guidelines for helping your child receive the Sacrament of Confirmation:

1. Regular participation in Sunday (or Saturday evening) Mass.
2. An appropriate understanding of the Catholic Christian life. The candidate should understand and reflect the life of Christ in their lifestyle.
3. A firm determination to live the Christian life to the best of their ability. The candidate must be a good steward, giving in Christian proportion of their time, talent, and treasure.
4. The candidate must understand the importance of personal and communal worship in the life of the Church.
5. Faithful participation in the Confirmation preparation program.
6. Affirmation that this is the candidate's personal desire and decision, to enter fully into the life of the Church. In some instances, candidates may not be ready to make the commitment at this time, and parents should not force them.
7. Commitment to further religious education by the candidate and parents or guardian. Reception of this sacrament is a beginning - not an end. It is one step in our life-long journey to holiness. The candidate must be willing to be actively involved in parish life after Confirmation.

Choosing a Confirmation Name

Why Should I Choose a Confirmation Saint?

When you were born, your parents chose your name. They may have chosen your name in honor of a special person in their lives: a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or close friend. They may have chosen your name for the meaning behind it. Perhaps they chose your name because they felt a close connection to a holy man or woman of our faith- one of the saints. Maybe they just really liked your name! Most likely, it was a combination of many factors. (If you do not know why your parents chose the name they did for you, why not ask them about it?) Your name gives you an identity; it tells others who you are. At your Baptism, you were called by name, and christened to become a child of God. You entered into the Catholic community by name.

How do I pick a saint for Confirmation?

As a part of your preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, you have the privilege and responsibility, just like your parents did when you were born, to choose a name. The tradition of taking a new name to show a new role can be traced back to the Old Testament. When Abram was called to lead his people to believe in the one God, his name was changed from Abram to Abraham, "Father of many nations." Again, in the New Testament, we find Simon's name changed to Peter, meaning "Rock," because he was to become the rock upon which Jesus founded his Church.

Now that you are about to be confirmed, it is time to choose the name you will take as a sign of your growth in faith. You are encouraged to choose the name of a favorite Saint (you can choose the name of a Saint of the opposite gender). Whatever name you choose, we ask that you do some research about your namesake.

- † Your Confirmation name should reflect your closer identification as a member of the Catholic Christian community.
- † The name you select can be associated with someone in your life, your parish, or your community whom you respect and admire. Many Confirmation candidates select a name from a parent or grandparent, honoring them for their example of love and holiness (as long as the name is a Christian name).
- † You can choose your baptismal name or you can choose a completely new name.
- † Your Confirmation name follows your middle name, i.e. "Laura Marie Maria Goretti Klanac"
- † PRAY! Just as you should pray about any decision you have to make, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you choose a saint as your patron/patroness.

REMEMBER: Do not choose a name just for the name itself; choose for the story behind the saint and how that saint can help you as you go forward in life. Make sure your saint is Roman Catholic-just because there is "Saint" in front of the name does not mean he or she is Catholic.

Where should I begin to choose a Confirmation name?

There are a variety of books depicting the lives of the saints and a book is a great place to start! Some of the books tell the life story of one saint in particular, and others give a brief story about the lives of numerous saints so you can read about many holy men and women all in one place. You can also use the internet to research the saints. Here are a few sites to check out: <http://saints.sqpn.com/>

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

<http://www.catholic-saints.info>

<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/byname.aspx>

Choosing a Confirmation Sponsor

What is the role of a Confirmation Sponsor?

The candidates, in consultation with their parents, choose a sponsor. The role of the sponsor is an important one. You should choose a Confirmation Sponsor who you see as a model of living the Catholic faith and someone with whom you feel comfortable talking about your spiritual journey. A sponsor must be someone who knows you well, who is willing to share his/her own faith, and be able accompany you on this spiritual journey to Confirmation. The sponsor must be a companion on the journey of faith. Just as friends do things together, share themselves and their resources, support and encourage each other, so do sponsors in the area of Christian and church life. Sponsors are there when needed: to affirm, teach, advise, console, strengthen, and guide. Just as a sponsor for baptism takes upon himself/herself the responsibility of helping the newly baptized person mature in the living a Christian life and offers his or her own life and practice of the faith as an example of faith, the Sponsor for Confirmation continues that work for the person who is to be confirmed. The Sacrament of Confirmation creates a spiritual bond between the one who is confirmed and the sponsor. The sponsor should be committed to be a part of the young person's life by presence and prayer, always realizing that a sponsor's prayers for that person are especially efficacious before God. One's "yes" to be a sponsor for Confirmation is not just a "yes" to the candidate, but also a serious commitment to God in taking on this obligation.

Making the right choice

The church suggests that it's appropriate for godparents to also sponsor their godchildren for confirmation but this isn't always realistic, especially if they no longer practice the faith.

The specific criteria for eligibility are listed below. You cannot choose your parents, but you can choose grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or even siblings. However, choosing a family member or friend for reasons other than faith pose the same problem; in other words, you should not choose a sponsor simply for convenience, nor should it be something that is merely honorary. If you're picking your favorite uncle, for example, he should be a role of faith for you.

Sponsors should actively engage with the young person, which is difficult to do if they live far away, particularly if they live in another state. If this is the case, there should be occasions when you will get together with your sponsor, or at the very least, be in communication with him/her.

A sponsor should be a good example who can explore faith questions with you. This doesn't mean the sponsor has to have all the answers, but they should be someone who is willing to walk with you, to be a mentor in some way. Sometimes teens ask people who are active in their parish to be their sponsor; sometimes even their confirmation leader.

The Church does not have specific responsibilities for confirmation sponsors, but there are some basic ways sponsors should help confirmands prepare to receive the sacrament.

- **Pray.** Besides the spiritual benefits, young people are encouraged by knowing that their sponsor is praying for them.
- **Serve as a witness** if the parish asks sponsors to write or present a testimony stating that the teen is ready for confirmation. Some parishes have drawn this aspect of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults process into youth confirmation formation.
- **Answer questions.**
- **Be a role model.** In whatever way a sponsor-confirmand relationship develops, being able to talk about faith and other aspects of life will make a difference. Along with their parents, a young person's confirmation sponsor shares the important role of guiding their faith, by words and actions.

Qualifications for a sponsor (according to Canon Law and Diocesan Mandates):

- Sponsor must be at least 16 years of age;
- Sponsor may not be a natural, adoptive, or step- parent of the confirmand
- Sponsor may be the same sponsor the candidate had at Baptism, or a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation
- Sponsor must be an active, practicing Catholic in good-standing within their parish, who regularly attends Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and receives the Holy Eucharist, and has been fully initiated into the Catholic Church, having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist.
- Sponsor, if married, must be married in the Church
- Sponsor, if single, must be striving to live a chaste life and therefore cannot be living with a person outside of marriage.

Sponsor-Candidate Required Activity

Our goal is not to put a burden on sponsors, but to help enrich the relationship between the confirmation sponsor, candidate, and God. Please see the appendix, where you will find a worksheet that needs to be completed(one each year) describing the chosen activity.

Sponsors – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can a non-Catholic who is a very strong Christian serve as a sponsor?
No. Only an active and practicing Catholic can serve as Confirmation sponsor.
2. Can a Catholic adult who has never been confirmed by my child's sponsor?
No. Only a confirmed, practicing Catholic can serve as Confirmation sponsor
3. Can my child have two sponsors?
No. There is some confusion about this because a child has two Godparents when baptized. But for Confirmation, only one sponsor is permitted per Candidate.
4. If the person my child wants as sponsor is not 16 but has already been confirmed somewhere else, can that person be my child's sponsor?
No. The sponsor must be at least 16-years-of-age on the day of Confirmation. It is OK if he or she is not yet 16 throughout the entire Confirmation preparation process, but must be 16 by the Confirmation day.

Choosing and completing a Confirmation Service Project

Why SERVICE? At Baptism, we received the virtue of love. This supernatural grace enables us to see Christ in others, to serve them without counting the costs, and to avoid hurting them. It leads us to use our gifts and talents to serve those around us in need. In the Gospel, Jesus calls us to feed the hungry, comfort those in need, and to live a life of service to others. In the book of James (2:14-18) we read: **“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead. Indeed, someone might say, “You have faith and I have works.” Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.**

Confirmation preparation is about helping you develop your faith as you make the decision to become an adult member of the Catholic Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains that Confirmation gives the one who is confirmed, “the strength to witness to God’s love and might in word and deed.” And at the Last Supper, Jesus told his Disciples, “This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). The life of a confirmed Catholic must be a life of Christian service, and so the preparation for full initiation into this life involves an experience of Christian service. Confirmation should help you better understand Jesus’ incarnation and redeeming work, and that understanding should motivate you towards acts of mercy in His name. Because Christ took the form of a servant, we too should become servants to others. What you learn in Confirmation should motivate you towards a life that reflects God’s love. Thus, service is a natural extension of Confirmation, where we learn of God’s great love for us, and you get an opportunity to show love, care, and concern for those in need.

Three reasons why service benefits you through your Confirmation preparation program:

- 1. Service creates a shared experience that develops relationships.** Research shows that when people serve together their experiences are heightened and relational bonds are created that transcend normal group boundaries. Performing service during preparation for Confirmation becomes a way for you, your families, and other church leaders to build relationships that will last long after Confirmation is over. It facilitates a supportive network of faithful people that you need to keep your faith healthy and active through the teen years and beyond.
- 2. Service creates teachable moments.** Research says students who participate in meaningful service activities, that include helpful reflection time, make academic gains and increase attachment, engagement, and motivation through high school and into college. Meaningful service opportunities, designed with periods of reflection, help the lessons you learn in Confirmation to stick and increase your interest in your faith practice. In order to get those gains, it is important that you focus not just on the service, but also on the impact of the service on yourself and those you serve. Faith growth comes when you also have meaningful, Christ-centered conversations with your pastor, parents, teachers, and other adults.
- 3. Service helps you develop character** As you perform service activities during your Confirmation preparation, you develop **awareness** about the concerns and causes in the world around you. You learn **compassion** by seeing that issues like hunger or homelessness are real. Putting a face to these issues

increases your empathy. You learn **respect** for others and yourself. The principle that everyone -- no matter where you're from, what you look like, what religion you are -- has the right to basic needs is such a simple and profound notion. Even grownups have been known to forget that one on occasion. You become more **responsible**. It's up to all of us. Don't look away. If someone is in need -- whether it's a friend or a stranger -- there are always opportunities to help and a little goes a long way. You learn **gratitude**. In our consumer culture where people are perpetually on the hunt for new gadgets, new clothes, new everything, being thankful and grateful gets lost -- fast. Finally, serving **empowers** you to realize that you can affect change in the world, even if it is in your local community.

4. Service builds connections between you, your church and your community. Providing service opportunities for you during your Confirmation preparation helps you identify and connect with organizations who are working in your community and beyond. Identifying these partners is incredibly helpful for your involvement beyond Confirmation. It allows you to build relationships with other parishioners, churches, and community and service organizations. Service provides opportunities for you to engage with parents and other adults in your life. Service can become a permanent part of your heart and mind; it can become a way of life. Service is more than asking you to volunteer at church. Service is not done for the sake of checking it off a list. Service should be deliberately planned so it can be continued beyond Confirmation. Service can take the Bible's call to share the light of Jesus out of the classroom and help you understand how you can show love and mercy to others.

In preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation, service is to be seen as a way of life, not "something to just get over and be done with." Candidates preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation must offer at least **6** hours of service per year; some of these hours must be in service to the parish such as being an altar server, usher or lector; singing in the church choir; helping out in the Faith Formation program; or helping at a parish-sponsored event or activity. The service hours can be completed as an activity by the Confirmation small group.

When deciding on what to do, reflect on ways you are already living out the Gospel message of Jesus. Think about your talents and decide on projects in which you can best use your talents. This experience is intended to broaden your horizons. Thus, as much as possible, projects should involve a new service area that you have not previously tried (except in the case of parish ministry). **Note:** doing chores (raking leaves, shoveling snow, washing dishes, caring for siblings) for your parents or other family members does **not** constitute a service project; these kinds of things are part of being a member of a family. Also, if you are paid for doing any of these things for non-family members (like neighbors), it does not count as service. If you have questions about whether a project qualifies, please discuss it with your group leader or the DRE.

Once you have completed your hours of service, you will be required to write a Reflection Paper. Please turn in the Reflection Paper with the Service Project Completion form listing all service hours attached to it. Please do not turn in the Service Project Completion Form until all hours and the entire project are completed.

Selecting a Confirmation Service Project

Before choosing a service project, pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance, thinking about the following questions:

- What gifts do you especially possess now and how can you use those gifts to assist the Church in its mission to serve others?
- Does the project offer a service to a person, the parish, or the community, and is it being done out of love, without pay, without counting the costs?
- Is it charitable service primarily to the poor, the disadvantaged, elderly, or handicapped (those most in need in our neighborhood)?
- How is the Body of Christ being strengthened through the service you chose?
- Is this an area in which you can grow in service?

Preparing to Write Your Confirmation Service Reflection Paper

- While you are performing the service, record your experiences of serving others in a journal.
- When the period of service has been completed, use your journal to write about the effect this service has had in your life.
- Your service project reflection paper should be about two pages in length.
- Be sure to answer all the questions under Writing the Reflection Paper section of the Guidelines sheet.

Suggestions for Service base on the Works of Mercy

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY¹

Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty:

- Organize/participate in a food drive
- Participate in parish or community cleanup day
- Organize a supply drive for an animal shelter (they need food/shelter, too.)

Clothe the naked:

- Organize/participate in a clothes drive and donate clothes to an area agency
- Sort clothing and other donations at a clothing bank (such as St. Vincent de Paul in Marshfield)
- Raise money to buy baby clothes for the Hannah Center in Marshfield

Visit the sick:

- Volunteer at a local hospital or the Ronald McDonald House.
- Make gifts (like Easter cards) for people in the hospital.

Shelter the homeless:

- Organize/participate in a collection drive for supplies for an area shelter. Call shelter to find out their needs.

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY*

Instruct the ignorant:

- Assist as a class aide in at Sunday school or help out in a CCD classroom with younger children.
- Tutor in a tutoring program at a grade school. (Contact the school office to see if you can serve.)

Pray for the living and the dead/Comfort the Sorrowing:

- Participate in "First Saturday" devotions. (This means you promise to go to Mass on the first Saturday of each month and pray the Rosary.)
- Volunteer to lead the Rosary before Mass. (Check with the parish contact person.)

¹*There are other Corporal Works of Mercy and Spiritual Works of Mercy that are not listed here.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Because candidates need to be in a state of grace (have no mortal sin on their souls) in order to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, they should receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the Confirmation day. Most parishes offer Reconciliation on Saturdays, and there are also communal Penance Services during Advent and Lent. You can also schedule a time to meet with a priest if the Saturday times and Penance Services will not work for you.

Faith Knowledge – Formulas of Catholic Doctrine

Confirmation is the last stage in Christian Initiation, but initiation itself is only the beginning of a full, active, and adult Christian life. As you continue to mature, your understanding of the Catholic faith should mature with you—you should not have an 8th-grade-understanding of your faith when you are in 12th grade. Some of your aides in maturing your understanding of the faith are listed below under the heading “After Confirmation.” Others are regular Mass attendance and Reconciliation, reading the Bible, referring to the Catechism, and other spiritual reading. All of these will help you gain a deeper understanding of the basics of the faith, often called the Formulas of Christian Doctrine, which are listed below and which you should be familiar with by the time of Confirmation:

1. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

2. The Two Commandments of Love (Mt. 22:36-40)

1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.
2. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

3. The Five Precepts of the Church

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and remain free from work or activity that could impede the sanctification of such days.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

4. The Two Types Sins: Mortal, Venial

5. The Seven Capital Sins (Deadly Sins): Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth

6. The Three Theological Virtues (1 Cor. 13:13): Faith, Hope, Charity

7. The Four Cardinal Virtues (Wisdom 8:7): Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude

8. The Eight Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
- Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
- Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

9. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2-3): Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude (Courage), Knowledge, Piety (Reverence), Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe)

10. The Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23): Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Generosity, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Modesty, Self-control, Chastity

11. The Seven Sacraments

Of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist (Holy Communion)

Of Healing: Reconciliation (Penance or Confession), Anointing of the Sick

Of Service and Vocation: Holy Orders, Matrimony (Marriage)

12. The Four Types of Prayer: Adoration (Praising God); Contrition (Asking for God's forgiveness); Petition (Asking for God's help); Thanksgiving (Showing Gratitude to God)

The Confirmation Liturgy

The rite for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation will place in a Mass "in order that the fundamental connection of this sacrament with all of Christian initiation may stand out in a clearer light. Christian initiation reaches its culmination in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. The newly confirmed therefore participate in the Eucharist, which completes their Christian initiation" The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. In other words, the Confirmation liturgy will begin in the same way that a normal Mass begins, except the Bishop, a deacon, and two or more priests will be present.

Sacrament of Confirmation – Presentation of the Candidates

After the Gospel the bishop and the priests who will be ministers of the sacrament with him take their seats. The pastor or another priest or deacon (if the pastor is unavailable) presents the candidates for confirmation. Ideally, each candidate would be called by name; however, because of the large number of candidates, each parish will be called and candidates will stand with their respective groups.

Homily or Instruction *The bishop then gives a brief homily, normally directed at the candidates. He will speak directly to the candidates and will ask them questions.*

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

After the homily the candidates stand and the bishop questions them:

Bishop: Do you reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All present: Amen.

The Laying On of Hands

"The laying of hands on the candidates by the bishop and the concelebrating priests represents the biblical gesture by which the gift of the Holy Spirit is invoked"

The concelebrating priests stand near the bishop. He faces the people and with hands joined, sings or says:

Bishop: My dear friends. In baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life to his chosen sons and daughters. Let us pray to our Father that he will pour out the Holy Spirit to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.

The bishop and the priests who will administer the sacrament with him lay hands upon all the candidates (by extending their hands over them). The bishop alone sings or says:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Anointing of Chrism

"The anointing with chrism and the accompanying words express clearly the effect of the giving of the Holy Spirit. Signed with the perfumed oil, the baptized receive the indelible character, the seal of the Lord, together with the gift of the Holy Spirit that conforms them more closely to Christ and gives them the grace of spreading 'the sweet odor of Christ'"

The deacon brings the Chrism to the bishop. Each candidate and his/her sponsor goes to the bishop. The sponsor places his right hand on the candidate's shoulder.

Bishop: Dips his right thumb in the Chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says: "(Name), be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Newly confirmed: Amen.

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Newly confirmed: And with your spirit.

Ceremony Dress Code for Candidates and Sponsors

At the Sacrament of Baptism we wear special gowns, the Sacrament of First Communion we wear white dresses or suit, at our Marriage we wear formal gowns or tuxedos. It is fitting to dress in celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation as well. For the Liturgy of Confirmation the candidates **and their sponsors** should wear “appropriate attire.”

Contemporary society does not provide much guidance as to what is truly “appropriate,” so some specific direction needs to be given. While the church greatly respects the uniqueness and individuality in each of its members, it holds that modesty is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and that “Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 25234). The U. S. Bishops state that “as Christians we should dress in a modest manner, wearing clothes that reflect our reverence for God and that manifest our respect for the dignity of the liturgy and for one another” (Happy Are Those Who are Called to His Supper, p 15).

It is in this spirit of fostering respect for each other and for sanctity of the Sacrament of Confirmation that we set forth a code of dress consistent with our culture’s view of modesty. Semi-formal, modest attire is appropriate to the solemn beauty of this occasion.

Men

Attire: Dark dress pants with a light-colored dress shirt and tie. Suit or sports coat is optional, but appropriate. Dark dress shoes must be worn.

The following are not appropriate:

- Tennis shoes/sneakers/flip flops
- Jeans, Khakis or baggy pants
- Tee shirts or Polo Shirts
- Novelty neckties (e.g., cartoon characters, logos, etc.)
- Formal Tuxedos
- Visible body piercing jewelry (visible tattoos should be covered.)

Women

Attire: Modest dress, skirt and blouse, pant suit or dress pants and blouse (dress or skirt must be knee length or longer; chest, back and shoulders must be covered); dress shoes. Sandals may be worn, but they should have strap backs (no mules). Also, when fixing your hair, your forehead must be uncovered for anointing from the Bishop. If nail polish is worn, it should be a subdued or pastel color.

The following are not appropriate:

- Flip flops/athletic slides/spike heels (heels should be modest, no more than 2-3”)
- Strapless dresses
- Halter or sheath dresses
- Mini-skirts
- Jeans skirt, casual or Khaki skirts
- Tight, backless, or low cut dresses
- Exposing the abdomen
- Bare legs (wear hose)
- Formal evening gowns
- Visible body piercing except for earrings (visible tattoos must be covered)

CONFIRMATION NAME FORM & ASSIGNMENT

Confirmation Candidate's Name: _____

The Confirmation Name I chose is:

Once you have chosen a Saint, prepare a report on the life of that Saint that demonstrates how he/she exemplified the virtues of Christian witness. It should summarize the major facts, virtues, accomplishments, and their special relationship with God. The report should also explain why you selected your Saint. This isn't a collection of facts but how you plan to continue to take inspiration and example from your Saint's life. Include a cover sheet with your name that features a picture of your Saint or other meaningful artwork. **Be creative!** (You will be presenting your Saint report to your class.)

Guidelines for your Reflection Paper

Type a 1-page reflection paper about your Saint. This is a personal reflection paper, not a research paper, but you should cite any sources that you use in the paper. Use the following guidelines:

1. Find out if you were named after a beloved family member or a favorite Saint.
2. What is your Saint's full name? Did his/her name change (for example, if your saint entered a religious order).
3. What is the Feast Day of your saint?
4. Describe the life of the saint you chose, including
 - When and where did s/he live and die (and how did this saint die)?
 - What was life like at that point in history for your saint?
 - What virtues do you see in your saint's example?
 - How did this saint follow Jesus in the way he or she lived?
 - How did this saint become holy?
 - How is this saint an example for your life?
 - When was this saint canonized or beatified by the Catholic Church?
 - How is this saint a role model for Christians today?
5. Describe how the life of this saint can be a model of faith and commitment to you.

Confirmation Sponsor Information

Candidate’s Name_____

Please complete the information below, and attach the Sponsor Eligibility Certificate to this form.

Sponsor’s Full Name_____

Relationship to Candidate_____

Sponsor’s Address_____

Sponsor’s Current Parish_____

City_____ State_____ Zip _____

I have chosen this person for the following reasons:

Confirmation Sponsor Eligibility Certificate

Name of Confirmation Sponsor: _____

Name of the candidate being sponsored: _____

QUESTIONS FOR THE SPONSOR:

What is your relationship to this candidate? _____

Have you received all three sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist? ____Yes ____No

When and where were you confirmed? (Date can be approximate): _____

If married, are you married in the Catholic Church? ____Yes ____No

If single, are you attempting to live according to the moral teachings of the Church (not living with anyone outside of marriage)? ____Yes ____No

Are you a practicing Catholic who regularly attends Sunday Mass and receives the Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation? ____Yes ____No

Are you attempting to live in conformity with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Church and witnessing to your faith in your daily life? ____Yes ____No

Do you understand and accept the responsibility of being a sponsor for the confirmation candidate named above, supporting him/her by your prayer and example in living the Catholic faith? ____Yes ____No

Statement of Sponsor:

I hereby attest that I am committed to my Roman Catholic Faith; that I am baptized and confirmed in it; and that I meet fundamental obligations as a catholic by participating in Sunday Mass, by receiving the Eucharist and Penance when necessary, by being open to the Word of God as revealed in the Scripture and taught by the Church, by witnessing to the values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and by seeking to be of service to others for the love of Him. I recognize that in accepting the role as sponsor, I become responsible to give good example to the Candidate as a committed and active catholic and to be support to his/her parents in the practice of mutual faith. As God is my witness, I swear that I have answered all of the above questions truthfully and meet the qualifications to be a sponsor for Confirmation.

Signature of Sponsor

Date

If Sponsor is not a member of St. Paul's, please also complete and attach this form.

Name of Sponsor's Church _____

Address of Sponsor's Church: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Sponsor's Pastor (please print): _____

Signature of Sponsor's Pastor: _____

Date: _____

Letter to Confirmation Sponsors

Welcome to Confirmation Sponsorship

Welcome. You have been chosen to be a Confirmation sponsor, congratulations! Thank you for taking the time to be present to a teenager on their journey of faith towards the Sacrament of Confirmation and their full initiation in the Catholic Church. In choosing you, this teen sees in you a profound faith commitment, finds trust, and knows you are someone who will care about them and their faith. Being a confirmation sponsor is not all that complicated, but it does take time, a caring heart and a listening ear. Your commitment to your teenager (candidate) as a role model and sponsor will play an integral role in helping them to understand what being a Catholic Christian is all about. As long as you are a practicing, mature Catholic, you need not worry.

As we begin this journey please do not underestimate the importance of your role. While being a Confirmation Sponsor has always been an honor, it is not an honorary position. When the students were asked to select a sponsor, they were asked to find someone who fulfilled the following requirements:

- A baptized and confirmed Roman Catholic over the age of 16.
- Who is in good standing in the Church.
- Who is not the parent or guardian of the student preparing for Confirmation.
- Who can serve as a role model and be present during this journey of faith.
- Most importantly, someone they see trying to live faithfully as a Catholic Christian.

You should be honored that your life has spoken to them in this way.

The Journey

In preparation for Confirmation, candidates (students) will explore the following areas of our Catholic Faith:

- Deep and profound knowledge of the Creed (what we believe)
- Understanding the identity of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Knowledge of who Jesus Christ was, and what Salvation is
- The mission of Holy Catholic Church
- The meaning of a sacrament, and how God is present in all seven Sacraments of the Church
- What it means to live a Catholic Christian Life and why it matters

Your Role

Suffice it to say, your role is that of both mentor and Christian witness. It is our firmest hope that in you, candidates will find not only inspiration, but true role models of faithful, moral Catholic living. Along the way I would ask you to be open to your candidate and "their" story of faith. Do not be afraid or put off by the questions that they may ask of you. Occasionally these questions are meant to challenge, but most often they are sincere attempts to understand the faith and how it relates to their lives. •

You are asked to ...

Pray for your candidate and yourself. As candidates decide to be confirmed, they need spiritual strength. Your prayers for them are important, but don't forget to pray for yourself also, that you can share why you value and practice your Catholicism. Attend Mass together, or even have the courage to come to Reconciliation together.

- **Give of your time and share your gifts.** You may be asked to help with various activities. This may mean working on a service project, sharing your own experiences, or writing a letter of encouragement. Offer a gift of spiritual significance—a new Bible, rosary or book about our faith or about the saint the candidate has chosen.
- **Don't miss the ceremony.** Participating in the ceremony is the easiest part of being a sponsor. Your basic job is to be a support, but your role on Confirmation day is only beginning.
- **Don't forget this newly confirmed Catholic.** After Confirmation day, remember birthdays and this anniversary. Continue to worship together, or from time to time do some Christian service.

On behalf of Fr. Don and all of the St. Paul's parish community I want to thank you for mentoring your teen through their discovery of their Catholic faith. I know that this can be one of richness and growth for all of us as we journey towards Confirmation.

Candidates Name: _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Confirmation Candidate & Sponsor Activities

(One activity per year is required.)

The role of a Confirmation Sponsor is to spiritually walk with the candidate during the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. As part of our preparation program, we ask the Sponsor and the Candidate to meet occasionally to share their faith.

A. We ask that you serve together, pray together and reflect on your faith together. Each year you will need to choose one activity below.

1. **Service Project.** Through service we discover more about who we are and about the unique gifts that God has given us. Explore together the needs of the world (individual, parish, community and world) and how the gifts of individuals are meant to meet those needs.

- Decide together on one meaningful service project in which you will both be involved. Find something that calls forth your unique gifts.
- Discuss how your involvement reflects Jesus' mission of service.
- Discuss options for further direct service or exploring social justice issues.

2. **Mass or another communal prayer** (e.g., Stations of the Cross, Adoration, Rosary). Through communal prayer, we develop our relationship with God and others. This also is a great opportunity to learn more about our Catholic liturgical traditions.

- Decide together which Mass or communal prayer service you will attend. You may attend a service at St. Paul Parish, at the Sponsor's parish, or any other parish.
- Discuss the significance of Mass or communal worship in your faith life.
- Discuss options for future participation at Mass or other communal prayer services.

3. **Choice Activity.** For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them (Matthew 18:20). Find an opportunity to share your faith in a casual setting. Grab a cup of coffee, take a walk, eat a meal, or go out to the movies – just spend time together.

- Decide together on an activity.
- Discuss the significance of taking time to reflect and share our faith with others.
- Discuss options for future faith conversations (with each other or other significant people).

B. Together, fill out the following reflection sheet. The Sponsor and the Candidate should discuss the questions together. Both the Sponsor and Candidate should sign the form.

C. Return completed reflection sheets to the Faith Formation office by March 31. Note: If the Sponsor cannot attend any of the above activities with the Candidate, another Catholic adult (including a parent) may complete the activity and reflection with the Candidate. If you have any questions, please contact: Marie Fleisner, Director of Faith Formation, 715-693-2674 / dre@stpaulmosinee.org

Confirmation Candidate & Sponsor Activity Reflection

You are welcome to write below or type your answers on a separate paper. Confirmation

Candidate's Name: _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Activity #1 Check one: ☐ Service Project ☐ Mass/Communal Prayer ☐ Other: _____

What did you do? _____

What did you learn about yourself and/or your Sponsor by participating in this activity?

How did this activity reflect or encourage your faith?

Signature of Confirmation Candidate: _____

Signature of Sponsor (or Proxy): _____

Activity #2 Check one: ☐ Service Project ☐ Mass/Communal Prayer ☐ Other: _____

What did you do? _____

What did you learn about yourself and/or your Sponsor by participating in this activity?

How did this activity reflect or encourage your faith?

Signature of Confirmation Candidate: _____

Signature of Sponsor (or Proxy): _____

Service Project Completion Form

(Note: This form must be turned in to the DRE **after** you have completed your service hours. This form must be completed for each service project. Make copies as needed.)

1. I acknowledge that (candidate name) _____ has performed _____ hours of service. The service consisted of (please describe):

Adult Project Supervisor Signature: _____

Adult Project Supervisor Name, printed: _____

Service Organization Name: _____

Date: _____

Service Project Reflection Paper

Once you have completed your service hours, write a reflection paper on your experience. This paper should summarize how your service has helped you grow in your faith. The paper should be at least one page, double-spaced, but no more than four pages. The Confirmation Service Project Reflection Paper should clearly address the following points:

- I shared God's love with others by . . . (describe what you did and who you did it for)
- I chose to do this service because . . .
- Who benefited from the service?
- Which Corporal and/or Spiritual Works of Mercy does this service reflect?
- How did you feel about the service you performed?
- How did the service help to build up the Church, i.e., the People of God?
- How has this service project helped you prepare for Confirmation?
- How do you see service being a part of your life in the future?
- How do you think the Sacrament of Confirmation will affect your involvement in serving others in the future?

Letter to the Bishop

Each candidate is required to write a formal letter to Bishop William P. Callahan who will preside at the Confirmation Mass. (A sample letter follows.)

The letter should contain at least three paragraphs and include the following information:

- A statement that you are making your own decision about becoming a confirmed Catholic
- A brief personal history; you can include information about yourself, your family, i.e., where you live, where you attend school, what might be your dreams for the future, etc.
- Information about how you prepared for confirmation
- Information about the various service projects you participated in and how you plan to continue to serve the community and the Church after confirmation

The Bishop's formal letter serves as your request for full initiation into the Catholic faith. The letter should be written thoughtfully and be respectful in tone. The letter should be typed and checked for spelling and grammar. Bishop Callahan (or a designee in his office; he is a very busy man), Fr. Don and Mrs. Fleisner will read each letter. Please make sure the letter is unfolded, appropriate in content, professional in appearance and delivered to the DRE by April 1.

SAMPLE LETTER

[Candidate Name]
St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish

Dear Bishop Callahan,

My name is [Candidate's Name]. I am formally requesting to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on [Date] at St. Paul Parish in Mosinee.

I am [age] years old and I go to [Name of School]. I am the youngest of four children. My dad is an engineer and my mom is a teacher. We have lived here in Mosinee for all of my life.

I asked my Aunt Linda to be my sponsor. She is my favorite aunt and I love her very much. She goes to Mass everyday. She told me that when she starts off each day with God, it makes the rest of the day seem special. She is very holy and she talks about God a lot. She misses my Uncle Bill, who died last year, but she told me that he is helping Jesus get things ready for her when she goes to heaven. She even prays when we go out to eat at a restaurant. In all these and many other ways, my aunt is an incredible inspiration in my life.

To prepare for confirmation, I made an effort to go do service projects with my confirmation group and with my family. Besides taking a more active role at church on Sundays, my family volunteered at the warming shelter in Wausau. Getting to know the needy really moved me to contribute more to those in need. The little work we put in made such a difference, and that was really heartwarming.

I chose Joan of Arc for my confirmation name because my grandma's name is Joan, and because my dad was in the navy and Joan of Arc is the patron saint of the military. She was a really great soldier and God gave her many special gifts. I thought she was an ideal person for me to look up to as a role model. I am looking forward to my Confirmation Day.

Yours Respectfully,
[Actual Signature]
[Candidate's Name, typed]

Candidate Confirmation Commitment Form

Candidate's Name: _____
First Middle Last D.O.B.

Address: _____

Parents Names: _____

Home Phone: _____ Parent Cell: _____

Primary Parent Email: _____

Candidate Email: _____

Candidate Cell: _____

I, _____ desire to enter the next stage in preparing for Confirmation. Therefore, I commit to the following statements below by making a check mark next to each statement indicating my acknowledgement of the requirements expected of me. I also understand that this process is at my own pace, and I will inform the Director of Youth Formation and Ministry when I anticipate completing this process.

- ☐ I will commit myself to a daily personal prayer life
- ☐ I will attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation
- ☐ I will fulfill all requirements of the program (class attendance, retreats, assignments)
- ☐ I will choose a Confirmation sponsor, one who is a model of faith for me
- ☐ I will complete my service project
- ☐ I will attend whatever retreats are necessary to fulfill the program requirements
- ☐ I will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving Confirmation
- ☐ I understand that if I do not complete the requirements before my scheduled Confirmation date, I will need to wait until the next year to be confirmed.

Candidate's Signature: _____ Date: _____

As the primary educator of my child, I pledge to make my best effort to prayerfully support my child in this endeavor, and I will work with my child to successfully meet these requirements in preparation for his/her Confirmation.

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____